THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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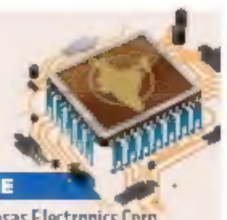
CABINET APPROVES 3 MEGA CHIP UNITS @ ₹1.26 LAKH CR OUTLAY



Construction of the units will begin within the next 100 days and the govt will provide financial aid

TATA GROUP TO SET UP 2 UNITS; CG POWER ONE

- Tata Electronics and Taiwan's Powerchip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corp will set up a unit at Dholera, Gujarat, at a cost of **₹91,000 cr**
- Tata Semiconductor Assembly and Test will set up a unit in Morigaon, Assam, at **₹27,000 cr**
- CG Power, Renesas Electronics Corp, Japan, and Stars Microelectronics, Thailand, will set up a unit in Sanand at **₹7,600 cr**

CABINET APPROVES ROOFTOP SOLAR SCHEME

Cabinet approved the rooftop solar scheme of 300 units free power for 1 cr houses with an outlay of **₹75,021 cr** for panel installation

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Economy grows at 8.4% in Q3

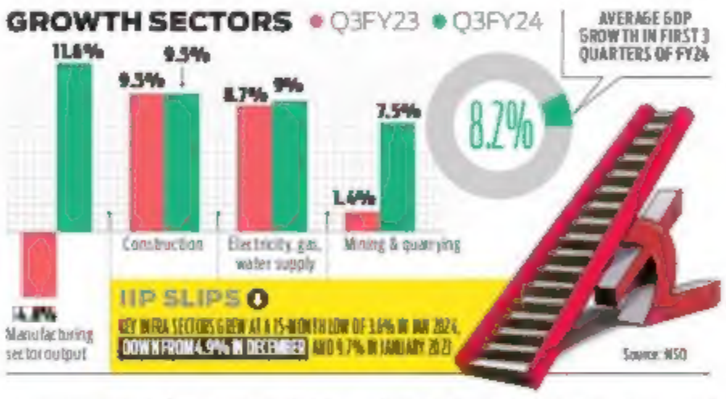
Expansion in gross value addition, however, was just 6.5% in third quarter, down from 7.7% in Q2

MONIKA YADAV @ New Delhi

THE Indian economy continues to spring surprises with the GDP growing at 8.4% in the third quarter of the current financial year (FY24). The numbers released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) on Thursday beat estimates by 140-170 basis points. Buoyed by the latest data, NSO has also revised its full-year GDP growth estimates for FY24 to 7.6%, up from the initial 7.3% projection made in January.

"Robust 8.4% GDP growth in Q3 2023-24 shows the strength of Indian economy and its potential. Our efforts will continue to bring fast economic growth which shall help 140 crore Indians lead a better life and create a Viksit Bharat!" Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted.

During a media briefing, Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran said the robust GDP growth and India's consistent outperformance are prompting a reevaluation by international organisations to raise their estimates of India's growth rate to 7% or higher. He emphasised the economy's ability to surpass projections, indicating a structural transformation in progress, particularly in infrastructure and inclusion initiatives that enhance purchasing power.



The sparkling GDP figures, however, don't hide the sluggish sequential growth in gross value addition (GVA), which measures the total value of goods and services produced. GVA grew just 6.5% in the third quarter, lower than 7.7% in the second quarter, and 8.2% in the first quarter of FY24. GVA growth in the third quarter of FY23 stood at 4.8%.

The latest GDP growth numbers were also helped by a downward revision (from 4.7% to 4.3%) of the figures in the third quarter of the previous year. Net taxes less subsidies, which jumped by 32% annually, also boosted GDP growth in the quarter.

The slowdown in GVA growth was led by manufacturing, construction and agriculture. Manufacturing sector GVA slowed down to 11.6% in Q3 from 14.4% in Q2. Agriculture sector growth declined by 0.8% during the quarter compared with 1.6% growth in the previous quarter. Construction sector saw the growth dropping from 13.5% in Q2 to 9.5% in Q3. Mining activities also slowed down to single digit growth of 7.5%.

After 55 days on the run, TMC's muscleman Shahjahan held

PRANAB MONDAL @ Kolkata

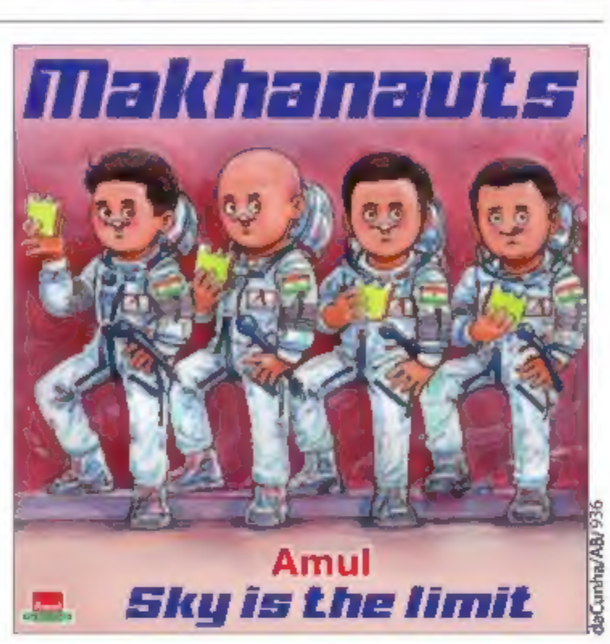
A day after the Calcutta High Court gave central agencies a free hand to go after Trinamool Congress strongman **Shahjahan Sheikh** for evading police action for 55 days, he was arrested by the state police in the wee hours of Thursday. The arrest came a day before PM Narendra Modi is to kick off his poll campaign in Bengal.

Sheikh was arrested from a hideout in Minakha, an adjoining pocket of the strife-hit Sandeshkhali, in a case related to the attack on Enforcement Directorate officers on January 5 when they went to raid his house in a foodgrain scam.

He also faces allegations of sexual abuse of women and forcible land grab in the North 24 Parganas island. Sheikh was remanded in police custody for 10 days. The state government then handed over the case to the state Criminal Investigation Department.

Shortly after the arrest, the ED moved the HC requesting advancing of a hearing scheduled on March 6 so to obviate the possibility of the state police tampering with evidence related to the attack on the federal agency. The court will hear the petition on Friday.

Later in the day, the Trinamool suspended Sheikh from the party for six years.



CREMATED

Punjab farmer Shubhkaran Singh, 21, who died during clashes with security personnel, was cremated on Thursday. There was no clarity on the farmers' Dilli Chalo march that is now on hold

SPEAKER DISQUALIFIES ALL 6 HIMACHAL REBELS AS CONG SETS ITS HOUSE IN ORDER

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

THE Himachal Congress on Thursday sought to put its house in order with the Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania announcing the disqualification of six rebels and the party deciding to set up a panel to coordinate between the party and the government.

Two days ago, the party had spectacularly failed to keep its flock together during the Rajya Sabha elections, as six of its lawmakers cross-voted for the BJP. It led to a tie and the BJP bagged the seat in the subsequent draw of lots.

The disqualified MLAs said they would challenge the Speaker's call in a court, alleging the decision was taken in haste under pressure from Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu.

For his part, Pathania said he arrived at the decision as the chairman of the tribunal and not as Speaker. He cited a Supreme Court verdict which said when a Speaker acts under the Tenth Schedule, he does so as chairman of the tribunal.

Pathania said they had defied the whip and attracted the provisions of the anti-defection law as they were not in the House when the Finance Bill was passed.

In the morning, ex-CM Virbhadra Singh's spouse and Himachal Congress president Pratibha Singh justified the dissidence. Later she nuanced it saying the challenge now is to win the Lok Sabha elections.

Addl Chief Secretary (Urban Devpt) Rakesh Singh, with BBMP Special Commissioner (Finance) Shivanand H Kalakeri (left) and BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath, in Bengaluru on Thursday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

Guidance value-based property tax could take time

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

WHILE guidance value-based property tax collection is to be implemented from April 1, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Special Commissioner (Finance), Shivanand H Kalakeri, after presenting the civic budget on Thursday, said its implementation could take time as the survey of properties was still underway and may not be completed by then.

For the guidance value-based property tax collection, all the properties in the city have to be assessed and documented.

Under the newly-proposed tax collection system, the categories to be filled in the form have reduced from 17 to six, and the Self-Assessment Scheme (SAS) evaluation will be limited to some of the categories as most of them will be auto-filled once the property number is registered — for which all the properties need to be assessed.

A few senior BBMP officials also pointed out that another factor that could delay this process is the Model Code of Conduct for the Lok Sabha polls that is expected to obstruct the property assessment process.

CONTINUED ON: P2

A ₹12k-cr budget outlay

The BBMP on Thursday announced a Rs 12,369.46-crore budget outlay with a focus to improve the image of the state capital under 'Brand Bengaluru'.

Caste census report submitted to CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

KARNATAKA State Commission for Backward Classes (KSCBC) Chairman K Jayaprakash Hegde submitted the much-awaited report of the Socioeconomic and Education Survey, popularly known as caste census report, to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday.

According to sources, the report has 48 volumes and the main recommendation booklet is of 200 pages, with each of the volumes possessing data on the set of different castes. The report also includes caste data based on Assembly constituencies, besides details about castes with smaller demographies, which were not included in earlier reports. The survey was conducted on 1,351 different castes.

The sources added that as many as 5.98 crore people were included in the survey. Over 3.98 crore are from the AHINDA (minorities, Backward Classes and Dalits) group, while 1.87 crore are Lingayats, Vokkaligas, Brahmins, and other castes.

"The committee has recommended increasing the reservation quota for Scheduled Castes. It also stressed that Veerashaivas and Lingayats are the same," sources said. P4

Veerashaiva-Lingayats threaten state-wide stir

With KSCBC Chairman K Jayaprakash Hegde submitting the final caste census report to the CM, the Akhila Bharata Veerashaiva Lingayat Mahasabha has demanded that the government not accept it. The forum warned that if the government ignored their demand, they would organise a state-wide struggle. P4

NO CHAI PE CHARCHA

Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates with Nagpur-based tea vendor Dolly Chaiwala, who is also a social media influencer. Dolly later said he did not know who Gates was when he served him tea. He quoted Gates as saying, 'Wow, Dolly ki Chai.' "We did not speak at all, he was standing just beside me and I was busy with my work," Dolly said | PTI

With new policy, ad hoardings may return in Bengaluru

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

THE BBMP in the 2024-25 budget announced that a new advertisement policy through the BBMP Advertisement Rules, 2024, will be promulgated. With this new policy, Bengaluru will see advertisement hoardings making a comeback after being prohibited by various legal provisions.

Explaining the policy, BBMP Special Commissioner (Finance), Shivanand H Kalakeri, said like it is in any other city, advertisement hoardings will be permitted in Bengaluru, too, but keeping in mind the court orders. "A draft has been prepared and the details are being worked out with Deputy CM and Bengaluru in-charge minister, DK Shivakumar. This will include where these will be permitted, when and their sizes," he said.

Much against the complaints from citizens and experts on visual pollution, the BBMP officials defended the act, saying it was needed, as it is a source of revenue. The BBMP in the budget has aimed at generating a revenue of Rs 500 crore annually from this, which will be used for Brand Bengaluru works. "Under the new policy, the rational, transparent and regulated system of commercial and self-advertisements will be permitted. This new policy will be on the same lines as the Advertisement Policy in New Delhi Municipal Corporation which has been approved by the Supreme Court. This will safeguard the aesthetics and visual spaces in the City," BBMP stated in its budget announced Thursday. P2

TUNDA

acquitted in blast case

A special court in Ajmer on Thursday acquitted Abdul Karim Tunda in the 1993 serial train blasts case, with his lawyer saying that the prosecution could not prove the charges | P10

Father slams crying baby on wall, kills her

AMIT S UPADHYE @ Hubballi

ANGERED by his daughter's incessant crying, a man threw the seven-month-old infant against a wall on Wednesday night, in Yadwad village of Dharwad district. Vaishanavi succumbed to injuries on Thursday at KIMS Hospital in Hubballi.

The accused, Shambulinga Shahapurmath (37), who was arrested soon after the incident, was booked for murder. He reportedly confessed before police officials that he was unhappy with his daughter's birth. The couple have a son, and Vaishanavi was his second child.

Shambulinga, a daily wage labourer, would quarrel frequently with his wife and had reportedly beaten her up too, the woman's relatives said. He had tried to harm Vaishnavi by threatening to pour hot water on her. The villagers had held a panchayat to solve the issue, but to no avail. Police said he was an alcoholic.

Shambulinga had gone to bed after having dinner on Wednesday night. He was woken up around 10.30pm when Vaishnavi started crying. According to his wife, soon after he woke up he started hurling abuse at the infant and banged her against the wall.

Neighbours rushed to Shambulinga's house and caught him, and called the police. A police team from Garag arrived and villagers handed him over. The baby, who suffered blood clotting in the brain, was taken to KIMS Hospital.

The accused was booked for attempted murder (IPC 307) on Wednesday night, which was converted to murder (IPC 302) on Thursday afternoon, after the infant died around 12.30pm. The funeral was held at Yadwad village on Thursday evening.

EXPRESS READ

Deadline for Kannada signage rule extended

Bengaluru: The state government on Thursday extended, by two weeks, the deadline for business establishments in Karnataka to comply with the Kannada signage rules, whereby information in the state language should be displayed on 60 per cent of the space on nameplates and boards. The decision was taken so that the order is duly followed, DCM DK Shivakumar said, through a post on X | P5

BIFFes kicks off

Bengaluru: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah inaugurated the 15th edition of the Bengaluru International Film Festival (BIFFes) on Thursday. Over 180 movies will be screened across the eight-day festival | P3

WITH THIS ISSUE

CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE

INDULGE

42 PAGES, INCLUDING 24 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)